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Vermunt, R.; van Knippenberg, D.; van Knippenberg, B.M.; Blaauw, E.

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Self-Esteem and Outcome Fairness: Differential Importance of Procedural and Outcome Considerations

Riël Vermunt
Leiden University and Högskolan Skövde

Daan van Knippenberg and
Barbara van Knippenberg
University of Amsterdam

Eric Blaauw
Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

Results of a survey of 222 detainees in Dutch jails and police stations showed that outcome-fairness judgments of individuals with high self-esteem were more strongly related to outcome considerations than to procedural considerations, whereas outcome-fairness judgments of individuals with low self-esteem were more strongly related to procedural considerations than to outcome considerations. It was proposed that these differences were due to the fact that (a) procedures more strongly express a social evaluation than outcomes and (b) individuals with low self-esteem are more concerned with social evaluations than individuals with high self-esteem. The implications of the results for other individual-differences factors and other populations than detainees are discussed.

It has long been recognized that fairness is of great importance to individuals' feelings and actions in social interaction. For instance, fairness has been linked to satisfaction with and acceptance of a decision (e.g., Greenberg, 1987; Lind, Kulik, Ambrose, & de Vera Park, 1993; Thibaut & Walker, 1975), the perceived legitimacy of authorities (e.g., Tyler, 1994), task performance (Cropanzano & Greenberg, 1997), organizational citizenship (Konovsky & Pugh, 1994; Moorman, 1991) and retaliative behavior (Skarlicki & Folger, 1997; Skarlicki, Folger, & Tesluk, 1999), employee theft (Greenberg, 1990), the use of influence tactics (van Knippenberg, van Knippenberg, Blaauw, & Vermunt, 1999), responses to layoffs (e.g., Brockner & Wiesenfeld, 1996; Konovsky & Folger, 1991), work satisfaction (Sweeney & McFarlin, 1993), and commitment to organizations, groups, and society (Tyler, Boeckmann, Smith, & Huo, 1997). Not surprisingly, in both fundamental and applied research, there is a strong interest in the factors influencing fairness judgments.

For the past 25 years, theory and research into the factors affecting fairness judgments have been guided by the distinctions

between the fairness of outcomes (*distributive justice*) and the fairness of the procedures used to arrive at these outcomes (*procedural justice*; Brockner & Wiesenfeld, 1996; Lind & Tyler, 1988; Thibaut & Walker, 1975). For obvious reasons, outcome fairness has primarily been studied in relationship to considerations concerning aspects of the outcome itself, such as comparison of own outcome with the outcomes of others (Adams, 1965; Walster, Walster, & Berscheid, 1978), with the outcome one expects to get (Folger, 1987), or with the outcome one thinks one deserves according to some other standard or reference point (Folger, 1993; Leventhal, 1980). Procedural fairness has primarily been studied in relationship to considerations about different aspects of the procedure, such as the accuracy and consistency with which the procedure is applied (Leventhal, 1980) or the respect shown to the individual that is the subject of the procedure (Tyler, Degoe, & Smith, 1996). Particularly interesting and relevant from both an applied and a theoretical point of view, however, is the finding that responses to an outcome may also be affected by procedural considerations (Lind & Tyler, 1988; Thibaut & Walker, 1975). When a procedure is perceived as fair, individuals react more positively to an outcome than when it is perceived as unfair. This finding, labeled the *fair process effect* (Folger, Rosenfield, Grove, & Corkan, 1979; for reviews, see, Lind & Tyler, 1988; van den Bos, Lind, Vermunt, & Wilke, 1997), is important because it shows that fair procedures may satisfy the people involved even when the outcome does not (Lind & Tyler, 1988). (This is not to say, however, that if the procedure is fair, the outcome will be perceived as fair irrespective of the outcome itself: Irrespective of procedural considerations, the outcomes of others, prior experiences, and the favorability of the outcomes per se affect outcome-fairness judgments as well [Lind & Tyler, 1988; Thibaut & Walker, 1975].)

Riël Vermunt, Department of Social and Organizational Psychology, Leiden University, Leiden, the Netherlands, and Högskolan Skövde, Skövde, Sweden; Daan van Knippenberg, Department of Psychology, University of Amsterdam, Amsterdam, the Netherlands; Barbara van Knippenberg, Department of Communication Science, University of Amsterdam; Eric Blaauw, Department of Clinical Psychology, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, Amsterdam, the Netherlands.

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Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Riël Vermunt, Department of Social and Organizational Psychology, Leiden University, P.O. Box 9555, 2300 RB Leiden, the Netherlands. Electronic mail may be sent to vermunt@fsw.leidenuniv.nl.

Procedural Considerations, Outcome Considerations, and Outcome Fairness

The finding that procedural considerations as well as outcome considerations affect outcome-fairness judgments has engendered studies of the factors affecting the relative importance of procedural and outcome considerations in determining outcome fairness. This research may be divided in studies focusing on the type of information available and studies focusing on the social information conveyed by procedures as compared with outcomes. As to the first, research shows that the availability of procedural and outcome information plays an important role. When people do not know the outcomes of others and have no basis for outcome-related expectations (i.e., typical bases for outcome considerations related to outcome fairness; Folger, 1987), they may, by necessity, rely more heavily on procedural considerations (van den Bos, Vermunt, & Wilke, 1997). Related to this is the issue of temporal availability. People may place more stock in the information they receive first than in the information they receive later (i.e., a primacy effect). Thus, procedural considerations may be more important in determining outcome fairness when individuals receive information about the procedure before they learn their outcome than when they find out about the procedures used to arrive at the outcome only after they learn about their outcome (van den Bos, Vermunt, & Wilke, 1997).

A second approach to the issue is to focus on factors that affect the salience of relational concerns. There is compelling evidence that people feel a strong concern about the fairness of procedures because procedures convey information about the individual's standing with, and the extent to which the individual is respected by, the person, group, or organizations enacting the procedure (Lind & Tyler, 1988; Tyler, 1994, 1997, 1999; Tyler & Lind, 1992). Enactment of fair procedures expresses a positive social evaluation (i.e., respect, status, belongingness), whereas unfair procedures express disrespect and marginality within the group or organization (Tyler et al., 1996). The importance of relational concerns is underscored by studies showing that the relational-interactive component of procedures is especially important in determining people's responses to the way they are treated (Koper, van Knippenberg, Bouhuijs, Vermunt, & Wilke, 1993; Tyler, 1994; Tyler & Bies, 1990; cf. interactional justice; Bies & Moag, 1986; dignity concerns; Lind et al., 1990) and that the perceived fairness of procedures may affect people's self-evaluations (Koper et al., 1993; Smith, Tyler, Huo, Ortiz, & Lind, 1998; Tyler et al., 1996).¹ Whereas procedural considerations have a strong link with relational concerns, outcome considerations, in contrast, relate more to resource-based, or instrumental, concerns (Tyler, 1994, 1997, 1999). Procedural considerations thus relate more strongly to a concern with social evaluation than outcome considerations. This line of reasoning suggests that an individual's responses will be more affected by procedural considerations compared with outcome considerations, the more the individual is concerned with social evaluation. Studies by Koper et al. (1993), Huo, Smith, Tyler, and Lind (1996), and Smith et al. (1998) corroborate this reasoning. Koper et al. demonstrated that individuals are more affected by the fairness of procedures when the situation is ego-involving (in the sense of being important to the self-concept) than when it is not. Huo et al. found that judgments of outcome fairness are affected to a greater extent by procedural considerations in

intragroup settings, where people presumably have a greater concern with respect and belongingness (Tyler, 1997, 1999; Tyler et al., 1996), than in intergroup settings. Smith et al. have shown that individuals are affected more by the fairness of treatment when they identify strongly with the institution the authority represents and when the authority is seen as an in-group member rather than an out-group member. Both identification with the institution and in-group membership of the actor may be expected to heighten a concern with social evaluation (Tyler, 1997, 1999).

The present study explored this line of reasoning further by focusing on individual differences with regard to the individual's concern about the extent to which he or she is respected and held in regard by the person, group, or organization enacting the procedure. The study of such individual differences may offer insights into the reasons why people may respond differently to the same treatment and may in general teach us more about the processes influencing the extent to which people rely on procedural considerations or outcome considerations in forming outcome-fairness judgments. The role of individual differences is generally under-researched in social justice research (Skarlicki et al., 1999). Yet, especially the link between fairness and relational concerns suggests that individual differences may play an important moderating role in the relationships of procedural considerations and outcome considerations with outcome fairness.

Self-Esteem and the Importance of Procedural and Outcome Considerations

In the present study, we focused on individual differences in self-esteem, because procedural considerations have been linked to esteem concerns (Koper et al., 1993; Tyler, 1999) and because the extent to which an individual is concerned with social evaluation is an important aspect of self-esteem (i.e., social self-esteem; Heatherton & Polivy, 1991). Self-esteem is the evaluative component of the self and is "a self-reflexive attitude that is the product of viewing the self as an object of evaluation" (Campbell & Lavelle, 1993, p. 4). Individuals with low self-esteem have a negative attitude toward themselves (e.g., Baumeister, 1993; Heatherton & Polivy, 1991; Rosenberg, 1979). Research findings suggest that individuals with low self-esteem are more uncertain (Baumeister, 1993; Campbell & Lavelle, 1993) and have a greater concern with how they are seen and evaluated by others (Heatherton & Polivy, 1991). For instance, low self-esteem has been linked to a higher need for social approval (Martin, 1984), higher social anxiety (a concern with how the individual is viewed by others; Greenwald, Bellazza, & Banaji, 1988; Riggio, Throckmorton, & DePaola, 1990; Ryan, Plant, & Kuczkowski, 1991), and higher public self-consciousness (Greenwald et al., 1988; Heatherton & Polivy, 1991). Low self-esteem may also engender a stronger reliance on social relations like group memberships (van Prooijen & van Knippenberg, 2000). These findings converge on the conclusion that low self-esteem is associated with a greater

¹ Note that some researchers treat interactional fairness as a distinct form of procedural fairness (e.g., Folger, 1987, 1993), whereas, in accordance with the group value model (Lind & Tyler, 1988; Tyler & Lind, 1992), we view relational-interactive considerations as the core of procedural fairness concerns.

concern with social evaluation by others. Relating this conclusion to the proposition that procedural information more than outcome information conveys a social evaluation, we predicted that outcome-fairness judgments of individuals with low self-esteem are affected more by procedural considerations and less by outcome considerations than outcome-fairness judgments of individuals with high self-esteem.

Method

Fairness concerns are especially salient in encounters with legal authorities. It is therefore not surprising that many justice studies have focused on such encounters (for overviews, see Lind & Tyler, 1988; Tyler et al., 1997). Studies have, for instance, focused on fairness judgments in encounters with judges (Thibaut & Walker, 1975), of individuals involved in a civil lawsuit (Lind et al., 1993), in encounters with police officers (Tyler & Folger, 1980; Vermunt, Blaauw, & Lind, 1998), and in encounters with prison guards (van Knippenberg et al., 1999; Vermunt et al., 1998). In line with this tradition, we tested our hypothesis in a survey of detainees in jails and police stations. Prison guards may allocate both material (e.g., extra blankets) and immaterial (e.g., attention) outcomes to detainees, and these outcomes may make the difference between a relatively easy and a difficult stay in a police cell or jail. It is therefore not surprising that the care that prison guards provide is an outcome of great concern to detainees (Blaauw, Vermunt, & Kerkhof, 1996; Vermunt et al., 1998).

Sample

Data were collected from two independent samples of detainees as part of a larger research project. A sample of 116 detainees of five large police stations in the Netherlands (Amsterdam, The Hague, Leiden, Rotterdam, and Utrecht) were interviewed. The majority of the police station detainees were male (92%), and the mean age was 29 years. A sample of 106 detainees of five jails (Amsterdam Overamstel and Havenstraat, Rotterdam Noordsingel, and Den Haag Scheveningen and Zwaag) were interviewed as well. The majority of the jail detainees were male (93%), and the mean age was 29 years. All detainees who stayed in the police station or jail during the research visiting days (1 day a week for 3 successive weeks) who (a) spoke the Dutch language sufficiently well and (b) were not violent and not under the influence of alcohol or drugs were requested to participate in the study. When detainees agreed to participate (95%), they were brought to a visiting room, where in the absence of other persons or officials they were interviewed by trained interviewers. The interview lasted about an hour. Confidentiality of information was guaranteed. After the interview, the detainees were led back to their cells.

Instruments

Self-esteem was measured by the Dutch translation (Vermunt & Shulman, 1996) of the State Self-Esteem Scale (SSES), developed by Heatherton and Polivy (1991). In the same way that the SSES has been used in previous research on social justice (Vermunt & Shulman, 1996), in this study, we used only the Social Self-Esteem subscale of the SSES, measuring the confidence one has in the positive appraisal of others. Items of the Social Self-Esteem scale with loadings of .50 or higher were used. Some of the items are "I am worried about what other people think of me," "I feel concerned about the impression I am making," and "I am worried about looking foolish." Responses are rated on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (*fully agree*) to 5 (*fully disagree*). The reliability of the Social Self-Esteem scale was satisfactory (Cronbach's $\alpha = .73$). Low-self-esteem individuals were distinguished from high-self-esteem individuals by median split ($M = 3.57$; a lower score indicates low self-esteem).²

Outcome fairness was measured by the question "How fair or unfair is, do you think, the care you get?" (cf. Tyler, 1994; van den Bos, Lind, et al.,

1997). The question could be answered on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (*fair*) to 5 (*unfair*). Outcome considerations were assessed with one item requesting a judgment of the outcome in reference to the outcome the respondent thinks he or she deserves (cf. Lind et al., 1990): "Do you think you get better or worse care than you deserve?" rated on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (*far better*) to 5 (*far worse*). Procedural considerations were measured with a 5-point, six-item scale, typical of measures of procedural considerations that stress the relational component of procedures (e.g., Tyler et al., 1996). Items were "How correct are the custodial officers in their communication to you?" (1 = *very correct*, 5 = *very incorrect*), "How decent was the treatment by the custodial officers?" (1 = *very decent*, 5 = *very indecent*), "How much respect do the custodial officers show you?" (1 = *very much respect*, 5 = *no respect at all*), "How reasonable or unreasonable are the custodial officers' questions and remarks?" (1 = *very reasonable*, 5 = *very unreasonable*), "How much consideration do the custodial officers show for your rights?" (1 = *much consideration*, 5 = *no consideration at all*), and "How much consideration do the custodial officers show for your position as detainee?" (1 = *much consideration*, 5 = *no consideration at all*). Cronbach's alpha was .86 for the procedural considerations scale. The measures of procedural considerations, outcome considerations, and outcome fairness were recoded to let higher scores indicate more favorable evaluations.

Results

We used regression analysis to test our predictions. Our hypothesis stated that outcome-fairness judgments of individuals with low self-esteem would be affected more by procedural considerations and less by outcome considerations than the outcome-fairness judgments of individuals with high self-esteem. The Self-Esteem \times Procedural Considerations and Self-Esteem \times Outcome Considerations interactions implied by this hypothesis were tested in hierarchical regression analysis (Cohen & Cohen, 1983). Because tests for interaction in field research generally have low statistical power (McClelland & Judd, 1993), we decided to explore the pattern of the predicted interactions even if the interaction was not significant at the .05 level. By implication, our hypothesis also suggested that for individuals with low self-esteem, procedural considerations might be more strongly related to outcome-fairness judgments than outcome considerations, whereas for individuals with high self-esteem, the reverse might hold. Therefore, to provide a full test of our hypothesis, in addition to the test of the interactions, we tested for the difference in importance of procedural and outcome considerations within the high- and low-self-esteem groups. First, however, we explored potential differences in the variables studied between police station and jail respondents and between high- and low-self-esteem respondents.

Tests for differences between police station and jail respondents yielded a difference only in self-esteem scores. Police station detainees had lower self-esteem ($M = 3.30$, $SD = 0.65$) than jail detainees ($M = 3.72$, $SD = 0.51$), $t(218) = 5.37$, $p < .001$, $d = 0.65$. To control for this difference, we added group (police station vs. jail) as a dummy variable to the regression analysis testing our hypothesis. Means, standard deviations, and correla-

² For ease of presentation and in anticipation of the comparison of the relative importance of procedural versus outcome considerations for high- and low-self-esteem individuals separately (see the Results section), we dichotomized self-esteem. Analyses with self-esteem as a continuous rather than a dichotomous variable yield highly similar results, however.

tions among outcome fairness, procedural considerations, and outcome considerations for the total sample and for high-self-esteem and low-self-esteem respondents separately are displayed in Table 1. Comparison of means showed that the high- and low-self-esteem groups differed on outcome considerations. Individuals with low self-esteem evaluated the care given as less deserved than individuals with high self-esteem, $t(202) = 3.16, p < .002, d = 0.37$. The other differences in means between individuals with low and high self-esteem were not significant.

To test our hypothesis, we conducted a hierarchical regression analysis with procedural considerations, outcome considerations, self-esteem (dummy coded 0 for low and 1 for high) and group (dummy coded 0 for police station and 1 for jail) as predictors of outcome fairness entered on Step 1 and the interactions between procedural considerations and self-esteem and between outcome considerations and self-esteem entered on Step 2. The results of this analysis are displayed in Table 2. Outcome fairness was related to both procedural considerations and outcome considerations, whereas neither self-esteem nor group was directly related to outcome fairness. With regard to the interaction effects, the relationship between outcome considerations and outcome fairness was moderated by self-esteem. For the Procedural Considerations \times Self-Esteem interaction, there was a trend toward the predicted interaction ($p < .11$).

To further explore these interactions, we first determined the regression slopes for outcome considerations and procedural considerations for the high- and low-self-esteem groups (following Aiken & West, 1991; by using different dummy codings). Patterns for both interactions were as we predicted. The relationship between outcome considerations and outcome fairness was stronger for individuals with high self-esteem ($\beta = .59, \Delta R^2 = .18, p < .0001$) than for individuals with low self-esteem ($\beta = .25, \Delta R^2 = .04, p < .005$; see Figure 1 for a graphic representation; note that the test of the interaction applies to the difference in regression slopes). Conversely, the relationship between procedural considerations and outcome fairness tended to be stronger for individuals with low self-esteem ($\beta = .46, \Delta R^2 = .12, p < .0001$) than for individuals with high self-esteem ($\beta = .27, \Delta R^2 = .05, p < .001$; see Figure 2; but note that the test of the interaction indicated that the difference in regression slopes was not significant). Second, we tested the differences between the regression weights for outcome considerations and procedural considerations for low- and high-self-esteem individuals separately (i.e., within-group rather than between-group comparisons). Because this involves testing betas that are dependent against each other (i.e., because they concern the relationship of two variables from the same population with the

same third variable, outcome fairness), we used a test for dependent betas that took the relationship between outcome considerations and procedural considerations into account (Cohen & Cohen, 1983, p. 111, Appendix 2). These tests indicated that for individuals with low self-esteem, the relationship between procedural considerations and outcome fairness was stronger than the relationship between outcome considerations and outcome fairness, $t(99) = 2.09, p < .05$, whereas the reverse was true for individuals with high self-esteem, $t(99) = 2.62, p < .05$. Thus, these results converge on the conclusion that procedural considerations are more important for the outcome-fairness judgments of individuals with low self-esteem, whereas outcome considerations are more important in relation to the outcome-fairness judgments of individuals with high self-esteem.

Discussion

In view of the central role that fairness plays in everyday social interaction, working life, and encounters with authorities, the question of how fairness judgments are formed is of central concern to both fundamental and applied research. The present study aimed to add to our understanding of outcome-fairness judgments by focusing on the differential importance of procedural considerations and outcome considerations in judgments of outcome fairness. Results of our study supported the prediction that individuals with low self-esteem rely more on procedural considerations and less on outcome considerations for judgments of outcome fairness than individuals with high self-esteem (i.e., even though the Procedural Considerations \times Self-Esteem interaction was not significant, the difference between the regression slopes for procedural considerations and outcome considerations was significant for both the high- and the low-self-esteem groups). These findings corroborate our general hypothesis that individual differences that are associated with a concern with social evaluation moderate the relationships of procedural considerations and outcome considerations with outcome fairness.

As we noted in the introduction, research into individual differences that moderate responses to fairness-related aspects of procedures and distributions has been scarce. The few studies that are available have focused on individual differences as they may moderate preferences for particular procedures or responses to unfairness in general. For instance, Rasinski (1987) found that value differences were related to the preference for equity-based versus equality-based public policies, and Skarlicki et al. (1999) showed that individuals high in negative affectivity and low in agreeableness were more likely to retaliate in response to unfair-

Table 1

Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations of the Study Variables for Total Sample and Low- and High-Self-Esteem Individuals

Variable	Total sample					Low self-esteem					High self-esteem				
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3
1. Outcome fairness	2.99	1.28	—			2.91	1.31	—			3.06	1.26	—		
2. Procedural considerations	3.45	0.63	.49	—		3.46	0.63	.57	—		3.44	0.63	.41	—	
3. Outcome considerations	3.52	1.09	.53	.36	—	3.28	1.15	.47	.48	—	3.75	0.98	.61	.25	—

Note. For the total sample, $N = 204$ after listwise deletion; for both the low- and the high-self-esteem groups, $n = 102$ after listwise deletion. All correlations are significant ($p < .05$).

Table 2
Results of Regression of Outcome-Fairness Judgments on Procedural Considerations, Outcome Considerations, Self-Esteem, and Group

Variable	B	SE B	β	ΔR^2
Step 1				
Procedural considerations	0.93	0.18	.46**	.12
Outcome considerations	0.29	0.10	.25*	.04
Self-esteem ^a	0.07	0.60	.03	.00
Group ^b	0.00	0.15	.00	.00
Step 2				
Procedural Considerations \times Self-Esteem	-0.39	0.24	-.41	.01
Outcome Considerations \times Self-Esteem	0.40	0.15	.42*	.04

Note. $N = 204$ after listwise deletion. ΔR^2 is the incremental variance explained by each predictor after the other predictors have been entered into the equation. After Step 2, $R^2 = .41$.

^a 0 = low, 1 = high. ^b 0 = police station, 1 = jail.

* $p < .01$. ** $p < .001$.

ness. To our knowledge, the present study is the first to focus on individual differences as a moderator of the differential importance of procedural and outcome considerations. Although the present study focused only on differences in self-esteem, our reasoning implies that its conclusion extends to other individual-differences variables that are related to a concern with social evaluation. Thus, we may predict that differential reliance on procedural and outcome considerations will also be contingent on individual differences in the need for social approval, social anxiety, and public self-consciousness. The same should hold for other individual differences that may be assumed to be related to a concern with social evaluation and social relations, such as the stability of the individual's self-esteem (which may to a certain extent vary independently of the level of self-esteem; Kernis, Grannemann, & Barclay, 1989), the need for esteem, and the need for affiliation (cf. Hill, 1987; cf. the need to belong; Baumeister & Leary, 1995). In this respect, note also that even though a concern with social evaluation is an aspect of self-esteem (Heatherton & Polivy, 1991) and we have used a measure of self-esteem that highlights this

aspect, other individual-differences variables may more strongly reflect a concern with social evaluation. Such variables, like social anxiety and the need for social approval, may exert stronger moderating effects than the rather modest effect sizes obtained in the present study.

The focus on the moderating role of individual differences in the present study complements research into situational factors that affect the extent to which individuals are concerned with the social evaluation expressed by the fairness of procedures. None of these studies of situational factors have focused on the differential importance of procedural considerations and outcome considerations in determining outcome fairness. An obvious implication of our study thus would be that the findings reported by Tyler (see, e.g., Tyler, 1997, 1999) about the moderating role of factors like group membership of the enactor of the procedure and identification with the organization enacting the procedure extend to judgments of outcome fairness. More in general, our findings corroborate the usefulness of this approach to the study of social justice in general, and outcome-fairness judgments in particular, and

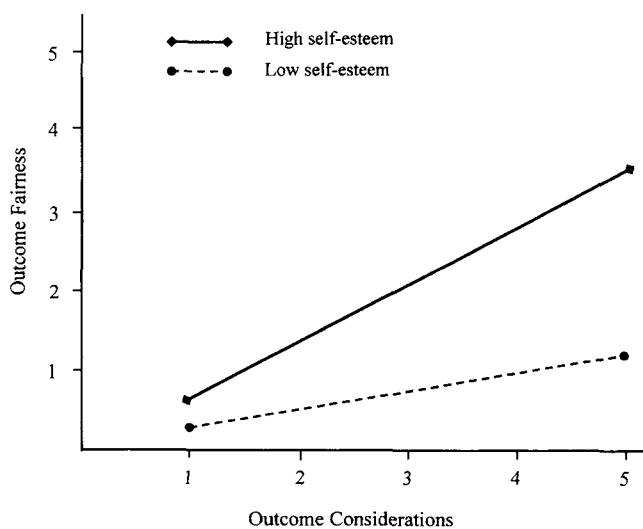


Figure 1. Outcome-fairness judgments as a function of outcome considerations and self-esteem.

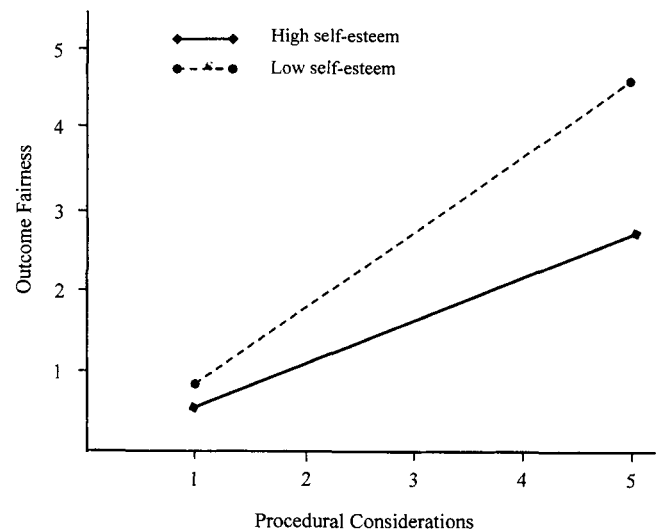


Figure 2. Outcome-fairness judgments as a function of procedural considerations and self-esteem.

suggest that it may be worthwhile to pursue this approach in greater depth. Future research might focus not only on the individual-differences variables discussed here but also on situational factors that may engender a concern with social evaluations and social relations, such as the factors discussed by Tyler and colleagues, and factors like the expectation of future interaction with, and dependency for outcomes on, the enactor of the procedure or liking for and attraction to the enactor of the procedure (cf. Mannix, 1994; van Knippenberg & Steensma, 1999; van Knippenberg et al., 1999).

Our theoretical analysis and, as a consequence, our measurement of procedural considerations highlighted the relational-interactive aspects of procedures. In view of the large body of research confirming that these aspects lie at the core of people's concern with issues of procedural fairness, this emphasis seems justified. Yet, whereas we, in line with work by Lind and Tyler (see, e.g., Lind & Tyler, 1988; Tyler, 1997, 1999; Tyler & Lind, 1992), view these relational-interactive concerns as a core part of procedural fairness concerns, others have taken a slightly different angle and preferred a categorization of these concerns as pertaining to interactional fairness, to be discussed and measured separately from noninteractional procedural fairness concerns (e.g., Folger, 1987, 1993). Because in this latter view, interactional fairness is also seen as a part of procedural fairness (e.g., Skarlicki & Folger, 1997), the differences between the former and the latter approach seem marginal. Yet, researchers that prefer the separate label (i.e., *interactional fairness*) for these interactional aspects of procedures may prefer to rephrase our conclusion as pertaining to the differential importance of interactional considerations and outcome considerations. Although we prefer to view interactional aspects as an integrated part of procedural fairness concerns, because both interactional and noninteractional aspects of procedures may relate to relational concerns (cf. Koper et al., 1993; Lind & Tyler, 1988; Tyler & Lind, 1992), we do not fundamentally disagree with this slightly different reading of our findings. Yet, even though both interactional and noninteractional aspects of procedures may relate to relational concerns, this distinction does point to the interesting possibility that the interactional component of procedures relates more to a concern with social evaluation than noninteractional aspects of procedures, such as, for instance, the opportunity to influence the outcome decision (Thibaut & Walker, 1975). As a result, the reaction to noninteractional aspects of procedures should be less contingent on situational and individual differences related to a concern with social evaluation and more on instrumental concerns like self-efficacy in relation to the opportunity to affect the decision (Brockner et al., 1998).

Our study focused on detainees in police stations and jails. It seems rather obvious to assume that these findings also hold for other encounters with legal authorities in which fairness typically is a concern, such as other encounters with the police (e.g., Tyler & Folger, 1980; Vermunt et al., 1998) and court cases (e.g., Lind et al., 1993; Thibaut & Walker, 1975). Moreover, in view of the large body of evidence that social justice concerns have highly similar effects in legal settings, organizational settings, societal settings, and laboratory settings (Lind & Tyler, 1988; Tyler et al., 1997), it seems not too bold to assume that the present conclusions generalize to other settings and populations. Yet, as usual, the proof of the pudding is in the eating, and more definite conclusions

about the generalizability of the present findings to other settings and populations will have to await the results of future research.

An obvious limitation of the present study is its cross-sectional design. As a consequence, our results are mute where issues of causality are concerned. Fortunately, the causality implied by our line of reasoning (i.e., procedural and outcome considerations as causes of outcome-fairness judgments) is firmly established in experimental research (e.g., van den Bos, Lind, et al., 1997). Another potential weakness is that space limitations (the study was part of an extensive survey of detainee well-being) have forced us to limit the study to single-item measures of outcome considerations and outcome fairness. Although such measures are not uncommon in fairness research, and the experiences of our interviewers indicated that these constituted straightforward, unambiguous questions for our respondents (cf. Sackett & Larson, 1990), multi-item measures may have been preferable. Future research replicating the present results using a longitudinal design and more extensive measurement of our key concepts will bolster our confidence in our conclusions. Such research may also incorporate measures of a number of other individual-differences variables and situational variables to more firmly establish the moderating role of factors related to concerns with social evaluation in fairness judgments. It is our firm belief that the pursuit of this line of research will greatly benefit our understanding of the psychology of social justice.

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